Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم
A Great Blessing

By Shaykh Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat
ḥafiẓahullāh



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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Foreword

Without doubt the Ummah of the final Prophet ﷺ has been blessed like no other. To be a part of the Ummah of the greatest of Allāh's ﷾ creation, the most special and beloved to Allāh ﷾, is a status beyond any. However, it is pitiful that despite being blessed with this great fortune, the Ummah today has forgotten its roots. It knows too little of the life of the Greatest of Mankind to be able to appreciate and follow His example.

The Ṣaḥābah ﵃, and thereafter the pious predecessors, valued this connection, and their lives were remarkable living examples of how valuable this connection is. Their statements, poetic expressions and detailed narratives of not only incidents from the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ but also his features and habits have left a treasure for this Ummah to benefit from. Many dedicated their lives to this, and to this day the 'Ulamā and pious individuals of this Ummah continue to strive to revive the sīrah and sunnah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

Those who have had the opportunity of affiliation with the respected Shaykh-al-Ḥadīth, Shaykh Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat *ḥafiẓahullāh* will have witnessed this fact. His passion and drive to bring about a strong and lasting connection between the Ummah and Rasūlullāh ﷺ is beyond measure. In a lecture, one of many on the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, entitled 'Muḥammad ﷺ – ek aẓīm ni'mat' ('Muḥammad ﷺ – A Great Blessing'), the respected Shaykh enlightened the audience with

incidents, couplets and quotes regarding the greatness of the Prophet ﷺ, to create an awareness of the great being whom not only this Ummah, but the entire creation is indebted to, and will continue to be indebted to.

This lecture was rendered into book form, originally in the Urdu language, and now in English in order to benefit a wider audience. It is hoped that this book will serve as a means of rekindling the flame of love for Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the hearts of every reader, and of reviving his blessed sunnah.

(Mawlānā) Junayd Makda
Rabī'-al-Ākhir 1434 / February 2013

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَكَفٰى وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلٰى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتَمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ، وَعَلٰى اٰلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتّٰى أَكُوْنَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَالِدِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِيْنَ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِيْ صَدْرِيْ وَيَسِّرْ لِيْ أَمْرِيْ وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِّنْ لِسَانِيْ يَفْقَهُوْا قَوْلِيْ. سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيْمُ الْحَكِيْمُ. اَللّٰهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا. إِنَّ اللّٰهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا صَلُّوْا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوْا تَسْلِيْمًا، اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

How can I Speak of Muḥammad ﷺ?

The blessed sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ is like an ocean that has no shore. What can a student like me, who has little knowledge, who is not articulate and who does not have complete recognition of the Prophet ﷺ, possibly say on this subject?

لفظ بے بس زبان ہے معذور
مجھ سے ذکرِ رسول کیا ہوگا
نہ کنارہ ہو جس سمندر کا
وہ سمندر عبور کیا ہوگا ﷺ

Words are not enough, my tongue is unable;
What mention can I make of the Messenger ﷺ?
The ocean which has no shore;
How can such an ocean be crossed?

اقبال میں کس منہ سے کروں مدحِ محمد ﷺ
منہ میرا بہت چھوٹا ہے اور بات بڑی ہے

O Iqbāl! With what mouth can I praise Muḥammad ﷺ?
My mouth is very small and the topic great!

وہ دانائے سبل ختم الرسل مولائے کل جس نے
غبارِ راہ کو بخشا فروغِ وادی سیناء
نگاہِ عشق و مستی میں وہی اول وہی آخر
وہی قرآں وہی فرقاں وہی یٰسیں وہی طٰہٰ

He who is the guide, the seal of the Prophets ﷺ, the
leader of all, who
Made the dust on the ground as spacious as the
valley of Sinai!
In the eyes of intoxicated love he is the
first and the last;
He is the Qur'ān, Furqān, Yāsīn and Ṭāhā.

The Prophet ﷺ says:

وَأَنَا حَامِلُ لِوَاءِ الْحَمْدِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ، تَحْتَهُ آدَمُ فَمَنْ دُونَهُ وَلاَ فَخْرَ

On the Day of Qiyāmah, I will hold aloft the Flag of Praise, below which will be Ādam ﷺ and all the other Prophets ﷺ; and I do not say this out of pride.

On the Day of Qiyāmah the Prophet ﷺ will hold aloft the Flag of Praise and all the Prophets ﷺ from Ādam ﷺ to 'Īsā ﷺ and their nations will be below his flag. However, he does not say this out of pride, as it is a favour upon him from his Lord.

وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ شَافِعٍ وَأَوَّلُ مُشَفَّعٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلاَ فَخْرَ

On the Day of Qiyāmah, I will be the first one to intercede; and I will be the first one whose intercession will be accepted; and I do not say this out of pride.

وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ مَنْ يُحَرِّكُ حِلَقَ الْجَنَّةِ فَيَفْتَحُ اللّٰهُ لِيْ

And I will be the first to knock on the door of Jannah, which Allāh will open for me. (At-Tirmidhī and Ad-Dāramī

from Mishkāh-al-Maṣābīḥ)

In another ḥadīth, the Prophet ﷺ says:

إِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ حُرِّمَتْ عَلَى الْأَنْبِيَاءِ كُلِّهِمْ حَتّٰى أَدْخُلَهَا، وَحُرِّمَتْ عَلَى الأُمَمِ حَتّٰى تَدْخُلَهَا أُمَّتِيْ

Indeed, Jannah will be forbidden to all the other Prophets until I enter it, and it will be forbidden to all the other nations until my nation enters it. (Kanz-al-'Ummāl)

One Look Turned the Dead into Life-Givers!

This Prophet is so great and of such a high status that whoever his sight and attention fell upon also became elevated in rank.

درفشانی نے تیری قطروں کو دریا کردیا
دل کو روشن کردیا آنکھوں کو بینا کردیا
خود نہ تھے جو راہ پر اوروں کے ہادی بن گئے
کیا نظر تھی جس نے مردوں کو مسیحا کردیا

Your precious teachings turned drops into oceans;
They enlightened the heart and gave sight to the eyes.
Those who were not on the straight path themselves
became guides for others;
What a gaze it must have been that turned the dead into
life-givers!

This was the shining light that made Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه into *Aṣ-Ṣiddīq* (the Truthful), 'Umar رضي الله عنه into *Al-Fārūq* (the Criterion for judging truth and falsehood), 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه into *Dhū-an-Nūrayn* (the Possessor of two lights), 'Alī رضي الله عنه into *Asad-Allāh* (the Lion of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى), Ḥamzah رضي الله عنه into *Sayyid-ash-Shuhadā* (the Leader of the Martyrs), Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه into *Faqīh-al-Ummah* (the Jurist of

the Ummah), Ibn 'Abbās ؓ into *Mufassir-al-Qur'ān* (the sage of the Qur'ān), Abū Hurayrah ؓ into *Muḥaddith-al-A'ẓam* (the Great scholar of ḥadīth), Bilāl ؓ into *Mu'adhdhin-ar-Rasūl* (the Prophet's ﷺ Caller to prayer), Abū 'Ubaydah ؓ into *Amīn-al-Ummah* (the Trustworthy one of the Ummah), Al-Ḥasan ؓ and Al-Ḥusayn ؓ into *Sayyidā-shabāb-ahl-al-Jannah* (the Leaders of the youth in Jannah), and Fāṭimah ؓ into *Sayyidah-nisā-ahl-al-Jannah* (the Leader of the women of Jannah). May Allāh ﷻ be pleased with them all.

تیری فیاضی نے ذرّوں کو بنایا آفتاب
بن گئے اونٹوں کے چرواہے زمانے کے امام

Your generosity turned particles into the sun!
Mere camel herders became Imāms of the time.

Before the advent of Islām, the Ṣaḥābah ؓ were insignificant people, like tiny particles that are not visible without the rays on the sun. However, when they were blessed with the spiritual attention of the Prophet ﷺ, they became very significant and became suns in their own right, illuminating the whole world. Those same people who did not know how to properly tend to their camels became the leaders of great intellectuals.

The Ṣaḥābah ؓ numbered more than 100,000, and they reached such a status that in the spiritual sphere each one is seen as a sun, moon and star in their own right! The Prophet ﷺ says in a ḥadīth:

أَصْحَابِيْ كَالنُّجُوْمِ فَبِأَيِّهِمْ اقْتَدَيْتُمْ اهْتَدَيْتُمْ

My companions are like (guiding) stars; whichever one of them you follow, you will be rightly guided. (Al-Bayhaqī)

It is Not Possible to Fulfil the Rights of the Sīrah

No one can truly fulfil the rights of conveying and propagating the sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ. An Arabic poet has said:

أَرٰی کُلَّ مَدْحٍ فِی النَّبِيِّ مُقَصَّرَا
وَ إِنْ بَالَغَ الْمُثْنِيْ عَلَيْهِ وَ أَكْثَرَا

I see every praise of the Prophet ﷺ as deficient;
Even if the praiser exaggerates in his praise.

No lines of poetry, no words of praise, no book on sīrah, no orator in his speech has ever fulfilled the rights of the sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ. Even if the one praising were to greatly exaggerate in praise, the status of the Prophet ﷺ is so high that the rights of relating his sīrah cannot be fulfilled.

My brothers, I have no status or standing, but great philosophers, thinkers and even 'ulamā have fallen short and not been able to fulfil the right of speaking on the sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ. Even the words of the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ were found wanting in this regard. In a ḥadīth, 'Alī ﷺ enumerates certain characteristics of the Prophet ﷺ, and then says:

يَقُوْلُ نَاعِتُهُ لَمْ أَرَ قَبْلَهُ وَلَا بَعْدَهُ مِثْلَهُ

> The one describing him would say, 'I have never seen his like, neither before him, nor after him.' (At-Tirmidhī)

Embodiment of Perfection

Ḥassān ibn Thābit ﷺ says:

وَ أَحْسَنُ مِنْكَ لَمْ تَرَ قَطُّ عَيْنِيْ
وَ أَجْمَلُ مِنْكَ لَمْ تَلِدِ النِّسَآءُ

خُلِقْتَ مُبَرَّأً مِنْ كُلِّ عَيْبٍ
كَأَنَّكَ قَدْ خُلِقْتَ كَمَا تَشَاءُ

My eyes have never seen anyone more
beautiful than you;
No woman has ever given birth to anyone more
handsome than you.
You have been created free from all faults;
It is as if you have been created just as you wished.

He is saying: "My eyes have not seen anyone more handsome and beautiful than you. Never mind my eyes, no mother has ever given birth to anyone as handsome as you. My Master! When I look at you from head to toe, I see nothing but perfection. Your eyes are so perfect, as are your nose, teeth and entire body. Your body is so perfect that it is as if Allāh ﷻ asked you how you would like to look and created you accordingly."

Above was the testimony of Ḥassān ibn Thābit ؓ. Even more amazing is the testimony of Jibra'īl ؑ, the leader of the angels. Jibra'īl ؑ has seen much of Allāh's ﷻ creation. He saw the Ambiyā ؑ, the cream of creation: he saw the likes of Ādam ؑ, Ibrāhīm ؑ, Mūsā ؑ, 'Īsā ؑ etc. He saw all the Ambiyā ؑ, who totalled approximately 124,000. When Allāh ﷻ grants someone the ability, he can see many such things that others cannot see. Once, when Jibra'īl ؑ came to the Prophet ﷺ, he said:

قَلَّبْتُ مَشَارِقَ الْأَرْضِ وَمَغَارِبَهَا ، فَلَمْ أَجِدْ رَجُلاً أَفْضَلَ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ صلى الله عليه وسلم

I have scoured the earth, east and west, and I have not found anybody more virtuous than Muḥammad ﷺ. (Aṭ-Ṭabrānī)

With the power granted by Allāh ﷻ, Jibra'īl ؑ scoured the whole

earth and saw every face: human, angel and jinn. However, he had never seen anyone more virtuous than Muḥammad ﷺ. When Allāh ﷻ has not created anyone greater and more virtuous than him, how can such a person be found?

Perfect in Appearence, Perfect in Character

The Prophet ﷺ is an embodiment of perfection in both his character and physical makeup. His face, hands and body were all perfect, as were his character and morals. No one can match him in perfection in either of these spheres.

حسنِ یوسف دمِ عیسیٰ یدِ بیضاء داری
آنچہ خوباں ہمہ دارند تو تنہا داری

The beauty of Yūsuf ﷷ, the [miraculous] breath of
'Īsā ﷷ, the shining hand [of Mūsā ﷷ] on one side;
All of these excellences are found together in you alone.

The beauty of Yūsuf ﷷ, the miracles of 'Īsā ﷷ and Mūsā ﷷ, the sweet voice of Dāwūd ﷷ, the kingdom of Sulaymān ﷷ, the friendship of Ibrāhīm ﷷ; Allāh ﷻ gathered all of these excellences that were distributed amongst the various Prophets ﷷ into a single bouquet, which he sent into the world in the form of Muḥammad ﷺ.

Qāsim-al-'Ulūm wal-Khayrāt, Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Qāsim Nānotwī ﵀ says in a couplet:

جہاں کے سارے کمالات ایک تجھ میں ہیں
تیرے کمالات کسی میں نہیں مگر دوچار

All the excellences of the whole creation are to be found
in you alone,

But your excellences, except one or two, cannot be
found in anyone else.

In these lines of poetry, the Shaykh is saying, 'My beloved! From your many excellences, a few are found in the Prophets 'Īsā عليه السلام, Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, Dāwūd عليه السلام, Ādam عليه السلام etc. and all the excellences of all the Prophets عليهم السلام combined, can be found in you.'

My brothers! Our Prophet ﷺ is the greatest Prophet of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. He is an embodiment of perfection in both physical and moral characteristics. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى says in the Glorious Qur'ān:

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

And you are surely on an excellent standard of character.
(68:4)

The Heart of Muḥammad ﷺ

The seat of good character and good morals is the heart. If generosity exists in the heart, only then will a person be able to spend generously. The same concept applies for other qualities of the heart, such as patience etc. Good character will manifest in a person's actions to the extent it exists in a person's heart. There is no heart in the creation of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى that is, or has been or ever will be, superior to the heart of Muḥammad ﷺ. And the level of good character that existed in his heart was not granted to anyone else by Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. All aspects of good character were found in his heart to the highest degree. Now, consider how great his pristine sīrah must be!

For this reason Allāh سبحانه وتعالى made the Prophet ﷺ a role model for us to achieve success in this world and the Hereafter :

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللّٰهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ﴾

There is indeed a good example for you in the Messenger of Allāh... (33:21)

The Prophet ﷺ is the best role model and example for any member of society. For a tradesman, a leader, a father, a husband, an imām, a liberator, a victim of oppression, a prime minister or president etc, he is the best possible role model. In the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ that are preserved through his beloved sīrah, there is guidance for all people to come until the Day of Qiyāmah. For this reason the poets say:

قدم قدم پے برکتیں نفس نفس پے رحمتیں
جہاں جہاں سے وہ شفیع عاصیاں گزر گیا
جہاں گزر نہیں ہوا وہاں ہے رات آج تک
وہیں وہیں سحر ہوئی جہاں جہاں گزر گیا

Blessings on every step, mercy with every breath;
Wherever the intercessor of the sinful reached.
Where he did not reach it is night even today;
Only those places that he reached have seen the dawn.

In those places which were blessed with the footsteps of the Prophet ﷺ, or the footsteps of the inheritors of the Prophet ﷺ - the 'Ulamā who disseminated his teachings - blessings and mercy descended at each step and with each breath.

ہر طرف تیرگی تھی نہ تھی روشنی
آپ آئے تو سب کو ملی روشنی
بزم عالم سے رخصت ہوئیں ظلمتیں

جب حراء سے ہویدا ہوئی روشنی

There was darkness everywhere; no light was to be found;
When the Prophet ﷺ arrived, all were blessed with light.
Darkness left the world when light emerged from the cave of Ḥirā.

The Sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ in Just One Couplet

We are currently reading a book on the sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ. A poet has taken the essence of the sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ and placed it before us in just one couplet. He says, figuratively, that if anyone wishes to truly understand the sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ then it is very simple:

اسوۂ مصطفیٰ کی یہ تفسیر ہے
روشنی، روشنی، روشنی، روشنی

The explanation of the sīrah of Al-Muṣṭafā ﷺ is:
Light, light, light and yet more light!

From the time of his birth to his death, there was nothing but light. Rather, even before his birth and after his death, to this day, whatever goodness is seen in this world is by virtue of his blessedness.

اسد! فیضِ درِ مصطفیٰ ﷺ کا کیا کہنا
جسے جو بھی سعادت ملی جتنی ملی وہیں سے ملی

O Asad! What can be said regarding the blessedness of Al-Muṣṭafā ﷺ?
Whatever good fortune anyone has acquired, however much anyone has acquired, it is from him.

Lesser than Allāh ﷻ, but Superior to All Others

Dear readers, the Prophet ﷺ is so great. His character is so great. Externally and internally he is so great. Allāh ﷻ made him so great that no one and nothing in creation can compare to him:

خدا سے تو کم اور سب سے اعلیٰ
دو عالم سے بالا ہمارے محمد ﷺ

Lower than Allāh ﷻ, but above all others;
Higher than both the worlds is our Muḥammad ﷺ.

No one has been created by Allāh ﷻ who can compete with the orphan child of Āminah, the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. The following are just a few examples of the exalted nature of the Prophet ﷺ:

كَانَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَجْوَدَ النَّاسِ

The Prophet ﷺ was the most generous. (Al-Bukhārī)

كَانَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسِ

The Prophet ﷺ was the most handsome...

وَأَشْجَعَ النَّاسِ

...and the bravest. (Al-Bukhārī)

أَنَا أَعْلَمُكُمْ بِاللّٰهِ

The Prophet ﷺ possessed the greatest degree of knowledge and recognition of Allāh. (Al-Bukhārī)

وَاللّٰهِ إِنِّيْ لَأَخْشَاكُمْ لِلّٰهِ

He was the most fearful of Allāh...

وَأَتْقَاكُمْ لَهُ

...and he had the highest degree of taqwā. (Al-Bukhārī)

The Prophet ﷺ was the most merciful from amongst the creation. The amount of mercy placed in his heart by Allāh ﷻ was not placed in any other being:

﴿وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنٰكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ﴾

And We have not sent you but as a mercy for all the worlds. (21:107)

Mercy for all the Worlds ﷺ

﴿اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ﴾

All praise is for Allāh, Rabb of all the worlds. (1:1)

﴿وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنٰكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ﴾

And We have not sent you but as a mercy for all the worlds. (21:107)

When the two verses above, from Sūrah-al-Fātiḥah and Sūrah-al-Ambiyā respectively, are taken together, they allude to the fact that *Rabb-al-'Ālamīn* (Rabb of all the worlds) sent the Prophet ﷺ as *Raḥmah lil-'Ālamīn* (Mercy for all the worlds). In this, there is an indication from Allāh ﷻ that He has made His beloved Muḥammad ﷺ a mercy for each and every particle and atom for which He is the Rabb. What can be said regarding such a vast mercy!

دیکھ کر اخلاق کو اور آپ کے الطاف کو
غیر بھی کہتے ہیں تم ہو رحمۃ للعالمین

Looking at his character, looking at his compassion;
Even the non-Muslims concur that he is a mercy for all the worlds.

Even today, if the non-Muslims study the sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ with fairness, with a clear unbiased view, without prejudice and in search of the truth, they will very quickly reach the conclusion that the beloved orphan child of Āminah was sent not only for the people of the Quraysh, or the people of Makkah, or the people of Al-Ḥijāz, or the people of the Arabian peninsula but as a mercy for all of humanity and for the whole of creation.

A Great Favour

Dear readers, Allāh ﷻ has favoured us greatly by connecting us to this great Prophet ﷺ. *Allāhu Akbar*! Allāh's ﷻ favours upon us are countless. He could have willed not to bless us with Īmān or He could have granted us Īmān, but we could have been from the nations of Ādam ﷺ, 'Īsā ﷺ etc. However, Allāh ﷻ has, without our being deserving and without our asking, made us from the best Ummah, that of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ:

﴿كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ﴾

You are the best Ummah ever raised for mankind... (3:110)

Allāh ﷻ has granted us the title of 'the Best Ummah'. What a great blessing and fortune this is!

کیوں نہ پائے تیری امت خیرِ امت کا خطاب
تو ہے جب خیر البشر خیر الرسل خیر الانام

Why should your Ummah not be granted the title of 'the Best Ummah';

When you are the best human, the best Messenger and
the best of mankind.

Without us deserving, without any effort on our part, without our asking, Allāh ﷻ, through His Favour and Grace, made us individuals of the Ummah of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. What a great blessing from Allāh ﷻ. *Allāhummā lakal-ḥamdu wa lakash-shukr* (O Allāh! For You is all praise and thanks).

Fulfilling the Rights of a Favour

When a person is granted a favour from Allāh ﷻ, it has a right that must be fulfilled, which is that the person shows gratitude to Allāh ﷻ for it. Allāh ﷻ has granted us a connection with this beloved Prophet ﷺ and included us amongst his Ummah; this is a great favour. Therefore, we must fulfil the right of the favour by showing gratitude; and the way of showing gratitude is to fulfil all the demands and rights of the favour.

The greatest right of the favour of being connected to the Prophet ﷺ is to read and study his sīrah in detail, learn his teachings and then adorn our lives with these beautiful teachings. If we make this the objective and mission of our lives then we will attain success in this world and the Hereafter.

The Meaning of Sunnah

We need to learn the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ and adopt his way – this is the path to success. I say 'his way' and not 'his sunnah' because when we use the word 'sunnah' in our day-to-day conversations, it refers to just a few popular, well-known sunan, like those of eating, sleeping, drinking etc. The meaning

of 'sunnah' is 'the way of the Prophet ﷺ', and 'the way of the Prophet ﷺ' is his entire life.

The Prophet ﷺ used to read ṣalāh five times a day, so we too should adopt this way. He used to read his ṣalāh in the masjid with jamā'ah, therefore we too should adopt this. This is the meaning of the term 'sunnah': every action found in the life of the Prophet ﷺ, irrespective of whether it is farḍ, wājib, sunnah or mustaḥab, is 'the way of the Prophet ﷺ'. All the commandments found in the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ connected to the physical and outer body are from his sunnah. Similarly, those commands connected to the spiritual aspect, such as not entertaining jealousy, hatred, malice, enmity etc. are also from the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. We have been commanded by Allāh ﷻ to make both our external and internal selves like the Prophet ﷺ.

How to Become the Beloved of Allāh ﷻ

The Prophet of Allāh ﷻ is so beloved to Him that whoever makes their physical appearance and also their spiritual condition like that of His beloved Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, then He makes him His beloved:

﴿ قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّوْنَ اللّٰهَ فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴾

> Say [O Prophet ﷺ], 'If you really love Allāh, then follow me, and Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins. Allāh is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful.' (3:31)

It is as if the Prophet ﷺ is saying to the people that he reads his ṣalāh five times a day with punctuality, so we too should do the

same. He paid zakāh, fasted, performed ḥajj etc. so we should do the same too. The same applies to all other aspects of ʻibādah (worship). And together with this, in the aspects of dealings and transactions, social conduct and good character we should also be like the Prophet ﷺ. In essence, the Prophet ﷺ is saying that if we emulate him in everything related to our physical and spiritual being, then Allāh ﷻ will make us His beloved.

Subḥānallāh! Dear Readers, you will become the beloved of Allāh ﷻ on account of emulating the great life of the Prophet ﷺ. It is such Kindness from Allāh ﷻ that He commanded us to beautify our lives by imitating such a great life so that we too can become His beloved. Furthermore, we will also become beloved to the whole of creation.

Solution to Current Problems

An easy solution to the problems that are blighting the entire world at the moment is that we adopt the way of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ; in fact, this is the only solution. We should endeavour to adopt the way of the Prophet ﷺ in every facet of our lives. Our ʻaqā'id (beliefs), ʻibādāt (acts of worship), muʻāmalāt (dealings and transactions), muʻāsharāt (social conduct) and akhlāq ḥasanah (good character) should all be like that of the Prophet ﷺ. If we do this and make our lives fully in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, then we will become the beloved of Allāh ﷻ, and when we become His beloved we will become the beloved of His creation. The Prophet ﷺ has said:

إِذَا أَحَبَّ اللّٰهُ عَبْدًا نَادٰى جِبْرِيْلَ

When Allāh ﷻ makes a servant His beloved, then Allāh ﷻ summons Jibra'īl ﵇ and says,

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ فُلاَناً فَأَحِبَّهُ

'Indeed, Allāh ﷻ loves such a person; you too love him.'

When Jibra'īl ﷺ hears this command of Allāh ﷻ, his heart is infused with love for this person. Such a person is now the beloved of Allāh ﷻ and Jibra'īl ﷺ. Then, Allāh ﷻ commands Jibra'īl ﷺ to address the dwellers of the heavens (the angels) and say;

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ فُلاَنًا فَأَحِبُّوْهُ

Indeed, Allāh ﷻ loves such a person; you too love him.

Upon hearing the command, their hearts too are infused with his love.

ثُمَّ يُوْضَعُ لَهُ القَبُوْلُ فِيْ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ

Then this person is granted acceptance amongst the people [resulting in everyone having love for him]. (Al-Bukhārī)

How to Become the Beloved of Creation

If we desire the people of the world not to hate us or have enmity towards us, but instead to look at us with love and affection, then we need to become the beloved of Allāh ﷻ. If we become His beloved, then automatically we will become the beloved of Jibra'īl ﷺ, all the angels, and the whole of creation. Remember! The only way of becoming the beloved of everyone is to become the beloved of Allāh ﷻ; and the method of becoming the beloved of Allāh ﷻ is mentioned in the Glorious Qur'ān:

﴿ قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّوْنَ اللّٰهَ فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴾

> Say [O Prophet ﷺ], 'If you really love Allāh, then follow me, and Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins. Allāh is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful.' (3:31)

The Enthusiasm of our Pious Predecessors to Adhere to the Sunnah

Our pious predecessors attained complete and widespread love and affection due to their strict adherence to the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. Their lives were adorned with the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. From the amazing incidents in their lives we find examples of just how much attachment they had with the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ.

Once, during a lecture, Ḥakīm-al-Ummah, Shaykh Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī ﵀ stated that the Prophet ﷺ liked pumpkin very much and enjoyed eating it.

To eat pumpkin is sunnah, not farḍ or wājib. If someone cannot eat it and his disposition does not prefer it, then there is no harm in this, providing one naturally does not have an inclination towards it and does not look down upon it.

Ḥaḍrat Thānwī ﵀ mentions that he went home to find that his wife, who had also heard the lecture, had cooked pumpkin. The next day, once again, his wife had prepared the same meal, and also on the third day! He asked his wife why she was preparing the same vegetable every day. She replied, "You mentioned in your lecture that it is sunnah to eat pumpkin because the Prophet ﷺ preferred it. Therefore, my heart desired that we eat as much pumpkin as possible whilst it is still in season."

Look at the desire and love this lady had for the sunnah of the

Prophet ﷺ!

Ḥaḍrat Thānwī ﷺ, amazed by her love for the sunnah, decided to monitor his own life and see how much it accorded to the sunnah. He monitored himself day and night, for one week, taking into account every action he performed, and comparing it to the sunnah method. He found that every action he did was according to the sunnah!

Dear readers, how astonishing this is! If we did not have reliance on our elders, we would not even believe such incidents. If they were so particular about the sunnah and mustaḥabb acts, we can only imagine how particular they were with their farā'iḍ and wājibāt.

Shaykh Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ﷺ and Adherence to the Sunnah

An associate of Shaykh Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ﷺ once asked Shaykh Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ﷺ about the sunnah method in a particular course of action.

We should note how our pious predecessors would enquire regarding the sunnah method in all their actions. The reason they would do this is because it had become an absorbing interest to them, as they desired their lives to resemble that of the Prophet ﷺ.

The questioner in the incident, had spent time in the company of Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ﷺ. Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ﷺ, being aware of this, asked him if he had ever seen Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ﷺ carrying out that particular action regarding which he had enquired. When the questioner

replied in the affirmative, Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ﷺ told the questioner that the manner in which Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ﷺ carried out the action is the sunnah method. Shaykh Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī ﷺ had so much conviction in Shaykh Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī ﷺ adopting the sunnah method in every action that without any hesitation, with full certainty, he was sure that his practice would have been according to the sunnah method, and he had no need even to refer to any books to make sure.

Shaykh-al-Ḥadīth, Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā Khāndalwī ﷺ and Adherence to the Sunnah

Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā ﷺ was in the last moments of his life. He was performing what was probably the last wuḍū of his life. The Shaykh's attendants were very perturbed by his illness. After washing his hands up to his wrists and assisting him in gargling, they began to place water into his nostrils to continue with the wuḍū. Due to the grief they were in, they forgot to make him perform the siwāk. However, due to the fact that he had spent his entire life adhering to the sunnah, and despite being at the brink of death, he was so mindful of the sunnah that he duly notified his attendants that the siwāk had been left out.

Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Ilyās Khāndalwī ﷺ and Adherence to the Sunnah

The uncle of Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā ﷺ, Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Ilyās ﷺ, had a similar attachment

to the sunnah. He too was in the final moments of his life. He was unable to talk and make others aware of his needs and requirements, except through slight gestures. With his eyes he gestured what the attendants understood to be a desire to remove his socks. The attendants went to remove his socks, but Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Ilyās ؒ pulled his feet away. This happened a few times, so the attendants called his son, Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Khāndalwī ؒ. After he arrived, he understood the same desire from the gestures, so he told the attendants to remove his socks. When the attendants tried once again, Shaykh Muḥammad Ilyās ؒ once again moved his feet away. Shaykh Muḥammad Yūsuf ؒ then said that his father wished to have his socks removed, but it was being done contrary to the sunnah method, hence he pulled his feet away. When wearing socks, the right must be worn first and then the left; and when removing them, the left should be taken off first and then the right. They had been trying to remove his socks beginning with the right, so he had been moving his feet away.

Make a Firm Resolution Today

Dear readers, ponder over the love these people had for the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and their adherence to. Even at the brink of death they did not abandon the sunnah method. In contrast, we cannot even do the simplest of sunnah acts, even at times of safety and wellbeing. We should, like these luminaries, learn and connect ourselves to the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, as this is the only path to Jannah.

نقشِ قدم نبی ﷺ کے ہیں جنت کے راستے
اللہ سے ملاتے ہیں سنت کے راستے

Following the footsteps of the Prophet ﷺ is the path to Jannah;
The path of sunnah connects one to Allāh ﷻ.

اگر جنت کا ارادہ ہے تم تمام ہی کا
تو گلے میں طوق ڈال دو محمد کی غلامی کا ﷺ

If you are all desirous of Jannah,

Then place the collar of subservience to the [teachings of the] Prophet ﷺ around your necks.

Let us resolve today that we will live our lives according to the way of the Prophet ﷺ. If we do so then we will become the beloved of Allāh ﷻ, and in turn of Jibra'īl ﵇, all the angels, and the whole of creation. And once this has been achieved we will see a revolution. The people in the world who look at us with eyes of hate and enmity will be compelled to love us. We need to asses and review our actions and rectify ourselves. When our actions are according to the teachings of the beloved of Allāh ﷻ, then spiritual blessings will become apparent, which will resolve the issues of this world and the Hereafter. Therefore, this is something very pertinent at this time and which needs our complete attention. If we, from this lecture, take the lesson of making a firm resolution to learn the way of the Prophet ﷺ and act upon it accordingly - whether the action is farḍ, wājib, sunnah or mustaḥabb - then success awaits.

The Statement of ‘Umar Al-Fārūq ؓ

I wish to conclude with the words of ‘Umar Al-Fārūq ؓ, who says:

كُنَّا أَذِلَّاءَ

We were a disgraced people.

Just how disgraced and wretched a people they were can be understood from the fact that the superpowers of the time did not want to rule over them. However, Allāh ﷻ granted them honour. But through what?

نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ أَعَزَّنَا اللّٰهُ بِالْإِسْلَامِ

We are a nation that was granted honour by Allāh ﷻ through Islām [the way of our beloved Prophet ﷺ].

فَمَهْمَا اِبْتَغَيْنَا الْعِزَّةَ بِغَيْرِ مَا أَعَزَّنَا اللّٰهُ بِهِ أَذَلَّنَا اللّٰهُ

For as long as we search for honour through ways other than that with which Allāh ﷻ granted us honour, Allāh ﷻ will keep us humiliated.

The only exit from humiliation is in complete compliance with the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ.

Propagate the Sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ

A point that I stress greatly at every opportunity is the importance of everyone diligently studying the sīrah of the Prophet ﷺ. There are many authentic books of sīrah, authored by authentic, reputable authors and available in different languages. We should acquire a book on sīrah and read and practise upon it. Together with this, whenever we have the opportunity to discuss this great sīrah with non-

Muslims, we should not let it pass.

May Allāh ﷻ grant me, you and the entire Ummah the ability to act upon these advices.

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ وَصَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلٰى نَبِيِّنَا
مُحَمَّدٍ وَّعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَصَحْبِهٖ أَجْمَعِيْنَ



There is none worthy of worship besides Allāh and Muḥammad ﷺ is the messenger of Allāh.

O My Beloved! How I Wish!

Mawlānā Sajid Irshad

I look at the past and delve into your wonderful life of events,
How everything was pre-destined, all that you acquired and spent.
Nothing was coincidental or a mishap, but a blessing from above sent,
Indeed, those were special souls around you who came and went.

I wish I was one of the loyal men around you, who had seen your face,
By Allāh ﷾! I would have loved to be the collyrium, which your blessed eyes did grace.
How I would have served your feet if I were your blessed sandal’s lace,
Or your blanket while you slept, before sleep did your nightly worship replace.

Alas! If I could have been the splendid moon which you split into two,
Or the single rain cloud which followed and provided shade for you.
If I was the dust on the floor which kissed the sole of your shoe,
I can only dream I was the northern wind which gently passed by you.

The tree which you leant upon during sermons and how it cried,
Or the flowing water of your fingers when the Companions’ ﵃ mouths dried.
Your obedient camel, impressing you during a race when it tried,
I wish I was your wandering donkey who gave its life and died.

The mountains and rocks which would greet you in earnest and joy,
When you sprinkled water lovingly on children and joked with a boy.
O my beloved! Everything about your life I learn and read, I can only enjoy,
My love with your life of wonderful events, I will not allow anyone to destroy.

I wish I was anything as long as I had been in your blessed time,
I would have been so grateful and my fortune would sparkle and shine.
He ﷾ has planned for the matter to be this way, and His choice is totally fine,
I am not any of the above mentioned, yet the Master of both worlds is mine.

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